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Word Perception and Word Meaning in silent reading in the intermediate grades.

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Word Perception and Word Meaning

in

Silent Reading in the Intermediate Grades

Submitted by
Jeannette Elivian
(A.B. in Ed., Northern Arizona State Teacher's College, 1934)

In Partial Fulfillment of Requirements for the

Degree of Master of Education

1958

First Reader, [illegible], Professor of Education

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Third Reader, [illegible], Professor of Education

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WORD PERCEPTION AND WORD SPELLING

IN

SILENT READING IN THE INTERMEDIATE GRADES

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

The Major problems to be considered in this thesis are:

1 To find if possible whether children recognize words they do not know.

2 To find whether children can gain the meaning from the context.

3 To find what sex differences are present in this matter of recognizing unknown words and finding the meanings from the context.

4 To find the relation of these abilities to different levels of reading accomplishment.

5 To find what amount of growth takes place during the giving of four practice tests.

Vocabulary has been considered by many investigators and ways of presenting new words have been discussed. The advantages of one method over another method of procedure have been presented and studies on the vocabulary difficulties of material in various subject matter fields have been made, but "Word recognition without well developed concepts or meanings like speed of reading has no value by itself."[1]

Which are the words that should be taught for the best results in vocabulary development? Studies have been made

---

[1] McKee, Paul, Certain Matters of Importance in the Teaching of Reading, Elementary English Review 14:116-18 April 1937.

[illegible] to some ways of calculating difficult words. One was a [illegible] in which 70 words were given to 40 [illegible] and [illegible] instructions to have them circle all words that [illegible]. Based [illegible] on the number of words circled [illegible] of which [illegible] were correct. The children were given a test [illegible] words which they had seen and they did not [illegible] to be [illegible] the last part. There was some evidence [illegible] to a [illegible].

[illegible] found that the "judgment of people is in [illegible] opinion [illegible] and [illegible] in [illegible] selection is [illegible]". He chose [illegible] from [illegible] [illegible] to [illegible] words [illegible]. In this [illegible] a list of 200 words and from this list [illegible] a multiple-choice test of fifty words. He found that [illegible] did not know the words that [illegible] did know. No [illegible] made on the words that they did not know to [illegible] or not [illegible].

More studies on the [illegible] of the social sciences have been made. [illegible] have been made on the [illegible] subject taught in the secondary school.

[illegible] Dale, E.W., Testing Word Difficulty, Journal of Educational Research, 41: 22-7, September, [illegible].

[illegible] Miller, R.O. A Technique for Determining the Relative Difficulty of Words Among Elementary School Children, Journal of Educational Research 6: 41-4 September, 1932.

everyone for years has thought of vocabulary as an extremely important part of the development of the child.

In nearly all tests that are given to children -- achievement and intelligence tests included -- vocabulary plays an important part. Many of these tests utilize vocabulary to such an extent that they are difficult if not impossible to interpret. The greatest disadvantage in vocabulary tests is that they test for one meaning only. If a child knows some other meaning for the word, but not the one required in the test, he is penalized. Terman in his new revision of the Stanford-Binet[4] has a vocabulary test which is to serve as an index to the mental age of the person being tested. Shedden[5] has worked out an interview technique which utilizes vocabulary for making an estimate of a person's intelligence. Johnson O'Connor[6] in his Human Engineering Laboratory has worked out a list of words and the percents of the population using them.

Educators have been given to understand that extensive reading makes for growth in vocabulary. Just what this growth is for all children has not been determined at the present time.[7]

4 Terman, L.M., and Merrill, M.A., Measuring Intelligence Houghton Mifflin Company, New York City, 1937.

5 Shedden, D.S., A Study of Disguised Intelligence Tests, Contributions to Education, No. 281, Bureau of Publications, Teacher's College, Columbia University, New York City.

6 O'Connor, Johnson, English Vocabulary Builder, Hoboken, N.J.

7 Darnell, D.D., Sullivan, H.E., Vocabulary Instruction in the Intermediate Grades, April-May, 1938.

"For years wide reading has been proposed as one way of learning to read and to gain new meanings or concepts. But there has been a considerable amount of loose thinking in the matter."[7]

Merely assuring oneself that a child reads widely does not mean that he will gain significantly. We have hoped that this was the case, and that they were increasing their ability with words and learning new meanings for them.

"With the child who reads well and widely this learning takes place with very little help from the teacher, but with the average child, the teacher's program of instruction is essential to the acquisition of a rich vocabulary. Some of the children become interested in the use of glossaries, the dictionary etc., independently,"[8]

while it is well known that many of them do not. It is not the majority of the class in any means which becomes interested in this sort of activity to the point where it becomes a fixed habit. A Child's habits of attention, his previous experience, his home background, his mental age, his reading age and other influences are brought to bear on the degree to which he will be successful in gaining anything in the way of expanded word knowledge through wide reading.

7 McKee, Paul, Certain Matters of Importance in the Teaching of Reading, Elementary English Review, 14: 115-18, April, 1937.

8 Cunningham, Ruth A., Vocabulary Growth in the Intermediate Grades Elementary English Review, 11: 150-52, Nov, 1934.

Muir[10] gives several suggestions as to ways in which to develop vocabulary. McKee[11] gives many valuable suggestions that are readily adaptable to the classroom situation.

Many of the studies that have been made in the field of social science have been made probably because it is in these studies where the vocabulary burden is first noticeable. Foster,[12] Wallrup,[13] Kerr,[14] and Kuenzen[15] are among those who have worked in this field. It has been found that the simplification of the vocabulary made for good comprehension in some cases and did not effect it in others.

Holmes[16] did a study of vocabulary to determine which of two methods of presentation was the better in history. She found that the direct method - that of attaching the words directly and sorting them out - was the better. Ample practice in writing and spelling the words was given.

10 Muir, Bertha V., Means of Developing Word Consciousness, Elementary English Review, 11: 125 - May 1934.

11 McKee, Paul, Reading and Literature In The Elementary School Houghton Mifflin Company 1934.

12 Foster, Charlotte, The Effect Upon Reading Comprehension of Paraphrasing Elementary Material Into Spoken and Written Vocabulary, Unpublished Master's Thesis, University of Iowa.

13 Wallrup, Lydia, Do Fifth Grade Pupils Need Definite Vocabulary Study in Geography? Unpublished Master's Thesis, Iowa University.

14 Kerr, W.E., What is the Relative Difficulty of Various Types of Geographic Ideas at the Sixth and Eighth Grade Levels? Unpublished Master's Thesis, University of Iowa.

15 Kuenzen, Hulerteen, A Study of Effect of Vocabulary Changes on Reading Comprehension in a Single Field, Unpublished Master's Thesis University of Iowa.

16 Holmes, Eleanor, Vocabulary Instruction and Reading, Elementary English Review, 1: 102-3, April 1934.

[illegible] gave a test in history which was designed to measure not only comprehension of the history material but also the ability of the children to identify words that were [illegible] in the selection.

O'Shea[17] made a study of the effect of interest on recognition. Pupils in the fifth closed class of which [illegible] in intelligence, chronological age, and child interest were used in the study. The children tested were those average in intelligence and in chronological visual [illegible]. She found that "Close [illegible] interest in the [illegible] the most to improved [illegible] of recognition."

Another [illegible] study comparing different word [illegible] its definition on the blackboard for the first time and the [illegible] periods each day, with an explanation of its [illegible] for its being there, they [illegible] gain on the average [illegible] twenty-five. This would seem to indicate that it is possible to pick up some words [illegible]. These [illegible] that children who have the range in intelligence, and in [illegible] twenty-five words is not a very great gain. It would seem to indicate the [illegible] prove good method of [illegible] if the [illegible] is to [illegible] a part of the vocabulary.

As mentioned in the Elementary English Review for [illegible] 1954 [illegible], "A large vocabulary is [illegible] to be desired; the [illegible] simple and correct use of words is more desirable still." In order to accomplish this [illegible] it will be seen that it is [illegible].

17 O'Shea, Morian, M., A Study of the Effects of Interest on Rate of Passage of Learning Vocabulary, Contributions to Education, No., 201, [illegible]

18 Wagner, Ralph, Report of the Western Journal of Educational Research, 55: 257-27 April, 1954.

imperative that the suggestions for continued and consciously directed vocabulary activities be carried on throughout the school experiences from the kindergarten through the college levels.[19]

> "Acquaintance with literature should be prolonged over twelve years. There must be a thoughtful acquaintance by creating an interest in words that sends one habitually to the dictionary or book on synonyms or other word book."[20]

Mann says[21] that we do not need to introduce more words into the vocabularies to be taught, but that we need to refine that which is already there.

Durrell[22] says "We do not know how many practices are necessary before a word encountered in reading becomes fixed in a child's vocabulary, nor do we know how long it remains in his reading vocabulary before it makes the transition into his speaking vocabulary. We do not know what skills are necessary to the best teaching of a new word. We know little of the types of errors and little of the best ways of presenting new words. In any of the intermediate grades there can be expected to be a difference in vocabulary ability of about four years. Since the textbooks for intermediate grades have no standardized vocabulary, it is impossible to predict which and how many difficult words a child will encounter while reading a book."

19 McKee, Paul, Reading and Literature in the Intermediate Grades, Houghton Mifflin Co., 1934.

20 Mears, C.M., Reading Makes A Full Man, English Journal, College Edition, 25: 158-41, February, 1936.

21 Mann, Carolyn, Vocabulary Selection, Education, 54: 371-4 January, 1934.

22 Durrell, D.D., Sullivan, H.B., Vocabulary Instruction in the Intermediate Grades, op. cit.

Sullivan[23] found little agreement between the list she compiled based on the intermediate grade readers in common use, and the lists by Thorndike, Buckingham-Dolch, etc.

The writer has found little in the literature dealing with vocabulary which is concerned with the problems as set forth in this thesis. This study was undertaken in order to give some indication of the work that can be done in the future toward a better understanding of the problem.

23 Ibid.

CHAPTER II

PLAN AND CONDUCT OF THE STUDY

Since the problem here was to find whether or not children are able to find words that are unknown to them, and to see whether they can get the meanings of words that they do not know from the context the materials for the tests had to be built. A sample of one of the tests is included in this chapter.

Seventy-three words were chosen from the list for intermediate grades that was compiled by Sullivan.[24] The vocabulary level was focused at the sixth grade level, the harder words being chosen. A few that are not on the lists, but were of low frequency on the Thorndike list[25] were used to try to be sure that there would be some words that all the children would not know before they did the reading. The words chosen were then checked with the Buchingham-Dolch list[26] and the Thorndike list. Table I shows the ratings of these words on the three lists. These words were then written into stories, four subjects being used that were thought to be of interest to the children of the fifth and sixth grades.

Each stimulus word was carefully defined in the story: some by the direct method of definition, some by synonym, and others by repeated use throughout the story. The meanings of these latter were to be gained by inference.

Since the matching type of test was found to be a little more reliable than other types of tests in vocabulary testing,

24 Merrell, D.D., Sullivan, R.B., Vocabulary Instruction in the Intermediate Grades, op. cit.

25 Thorndike, E.L., A Teacher's Word Book, Bureau of Publications, Columbia University, New York City.

26 Buchingham, B.R., Dolch, E.W., A Combined Word List, Ginn and Company, 1936.

TABLE I

RATINGS OF SEVENTY - THREE STIMULUS WORDS ON THE BUCKINGHAM - DOLCH, THORNDIKE, AND SULLIVAN WORD LISTS.

	S.	B.D.	T.
decides	6	6	7
altitude	-	6	6
vertical	6	7	6
zoology	-	-	11
chinchilla	-	-	14
pelt	8	6	8
plentiful	5	6	5a
negotiating	-	-	8
permeable	6	7	5b
hazardous	6	-	11
gradually	-	6	5a
resembles	-	6	4a
rodent	-	7	14
luxurious	6	8	7
extinct	-	-	7
nocturnal	6	-	12
mesa	-	-	-
ceremony	6	6	4a
unique	6	7	6
annually	-	-	12
insure	-	5	7

TABLE I CON'D

	S.	R.T.	T.
hospitable	6 (hospitality)	8	6
reptiles	6	7	3
vicinity	6	5	6
solemnity	8 (solemnly)	-	7
distinction	3	-	5b
ignorance	-	6	11
formula	-	7	8
monotonous	6	7	6
chanting	6 (chanted)	-	5a (chant)
perspiration	5	6	11
symbol	-	7	4L
mediators	-	-	10
tranquil	8	6	6
frenzied	-	-	6 (frenzy)
profession	6	6	6
wried	6	4 (wry)	5 (wry)
cleanness	-	8	7
artificial	6	5	5
perseverance	6 (persevere)	7 (persevere	7
experiments	6	6	5
ambition	6	5	5
novel (This use?)	6	5	6
idiot	4	8	8b
diligence	6 (diligent)	7	7

TABLE I CONT'D

	S.	D.D.	T.
brilliant	4	4	4
distinctive	-	-	3
genuine	3	5	5
horticulturist	-	3	20
profusion	3	-	15
petal	-	5	6
selection	-	6	6
distinguished	6	-	11
exquisite	-	3	5
loiter	3	7	6
nautical	6	-	12
current	-	4	7
drift	-	-	12
derelict	6	-	11 (dereliction)
infest	-	3	3
water-logged	-	-	-
swash	-	-	-
elusive	7	-	17
localities	3 (locality)	-	7
paraffin	5	3	10
hulk	6	-	9
invisible	6	5	40
collide	3 (collision)	3	15
salvaged	-	3	14

TABLE I CONT'D

	S.	B.D.	T.
combustible	-	8	14
debris	-	-	30
estimate	-	5	45
occupant	3	3	3

Elivian

Name_____ Grade_____ Date_____ 1938

AN UNUSUAL CEREMONY

Situated in the northern part of Arizona about one hundred miles from a railroad is a group of Indian villages. A tribe or band of people known as the Hopi Indians lives there. These villages are on mesas, those high flat topped hills with steep sides that are found in that part of our country. Every year about the middle of August they hold a ceremony in one of the villages. It is known as the Hopi Indian Snake Dance. This ceremony is a unique one and there is no other like it anywhere. It is held annually to insure rain for the crops. This is an arid part of the country that they live in. They have a yearly rain fall of less than twenty inches and they want to make sure that the rain falls when they need it. They believe that it is the evil spirits who keep the rain from falling and watering their crops. They believe also that snakes are the messengers of the evil spirits and think that if they take these wiggly, creepy, snakes in and treat them well and are hospitable to them, they will return to their homes and tell the gods that the Indians are good people and ask the gods to let it rain.

The reptiles are gathered in the vicinity of the Indians' homes. The Indians go out on the desert near the places where they live and spend many days in getting the snakes together. When they reach home they place the snakes in pits and feed and care for them until the men come to take them into the dance. With great solemnity and seriousness, the members of the tribe enter who have the distinction, or honor of, holding the office of snake priest. Each takes a snake in his hands and dances. They

Name_____ Date_____ Elivian 1938

go round and round, first in a circle and then in a snake-like curving line.

For some reason that is a puzzle to doctors the dancers are seldom struck by the snakes. They are very puzzled over the fact that the Indians when bitten seem to suffer little or no annoyance from the bite. They are not bothered at all in most cases. Whether they have some secret formula, or way of making a medicine from the desert plants, or whether they use something else to check the action of the poison, is a mystery to the white man.

To the monotonous beat of the drums the dancers whirl and whirl in frenzied excitement. They dance madly from place to place stirred by the beating of the drums. Some stand on the side lines and sing, their monotonous voices chanting on and on in the same tone, hardly ever changing from one note to another.

Since it is held in August and the sun is very hot, the backs of the dancers gleam with perspiration, or sweat. They have rain and lightening symbols painted on their backs, shoulders, and chests. They hope the use of these signs will make the rain come.

When the dance is over the snake priests run to the edge of the mesa and give the snakes their freedom. The snakes are the mediators, or the go-betweens, who go to the gods and ask for rain for the Indians. And no matter how tranquil the sky, nor how calm the day, it nearly always rains after this ceremony. Those who have kept records say that it has rained thirty-nine of the fifty years for which the records have been kept.

Number II

Elivian

Name_____Grade_____Date_____ 1938

_____insure	1. Going off and on without much change.
_____distinction	2. A flat-topped hill or small plateau having steep sides.
_____mesa	3. A place where sick or injured are cared for.
_____monotonous	4. To make sure.
_____annoyance	5. Honor.
_____ceremony	6. Very big.
_____frenzied	7. Something done in a formal way as a religious custom.
_____hospitable	8. Anything that bothers or pesters.
_____unique	9. In one's own neighborhood or near one's home.
_____vicinity	10. Being kind to friends and guests in your home.
	11. Not having a like or equal.
	12. Widly or madly excited.

_____chanting	1. According to custom.
_____mediator	2. Seriousness.
_____formula	3. A set of directions for mixing a medicine or a recipe.
_____reptile	4. A peace maker or go-between.
_____tranquil	5. That which stands for something else.
_____symbol	6. Singing in one tone.
_____annually	7. Sweat.
_____perspiration	8. Done or taking place every year.
_____solemnity	9. A snake or lizzard or the like.
	10. Very calm and quiet.
	11. To feed or care for.
	12. Dry, barren; having little rain or moisture.

Number II

Elivian

Name_____Grade_____Date_____ 1938

_____insure	1. Going off and on without much change.
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_____solemnity	9. A snake or lizzard or the like.
	10. Very calm and quiet.
	11. To feed or care for.
	12. Dry, barren; having little rain or moisture.

[27] these words were grouped for a matching test. Eight to ten words were used in a group in order to avoid confusion on the part of the children, and ten to twelve definitions were used to make for more thinking.

The stories to be read were introduced to the children and they were allowed to discuss from the title for a few minutes. They were given mimeographed copies of the story which with the instructions that they were to record on their read any words the meanings of which they were not sure. Lines were drawn down the right side of the paper for this purpose. There was no time limit on the reading. All finished in from thirty to forty-five minutes.

When this was finished they were given the matching test numbered I, and told to match the words with the definition. They were not permitted to refer to the story while doing this.

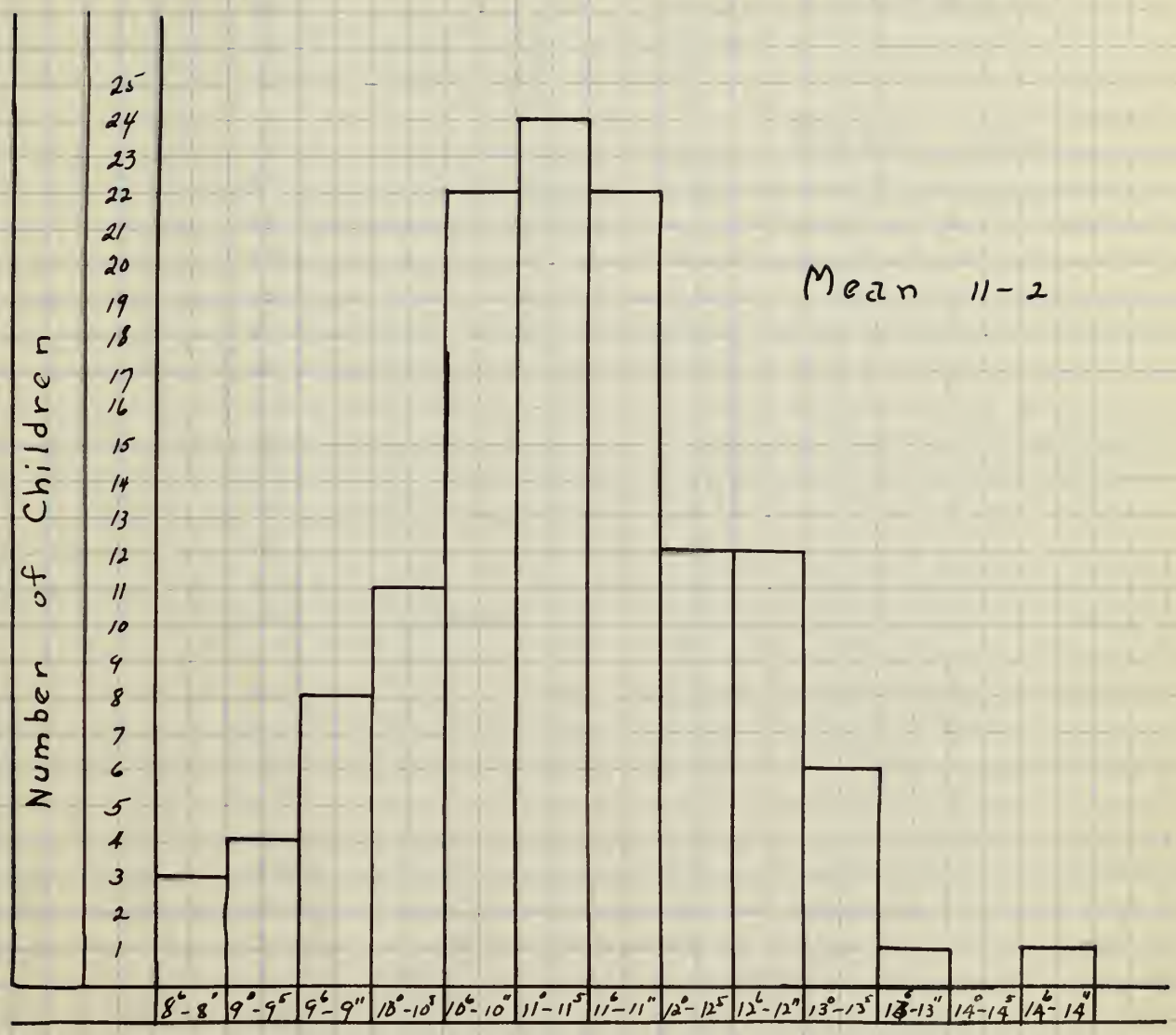
When they had finished this they were given another copy of the matching exercise. This was numbered II and was an exact duplicate of the previous one. The children were instructed to read the story to find the meanings of any words that they did not know. Otherwise they were to proceed exactly as before.

An attempt was made to explain the tests and their purpose to the children.

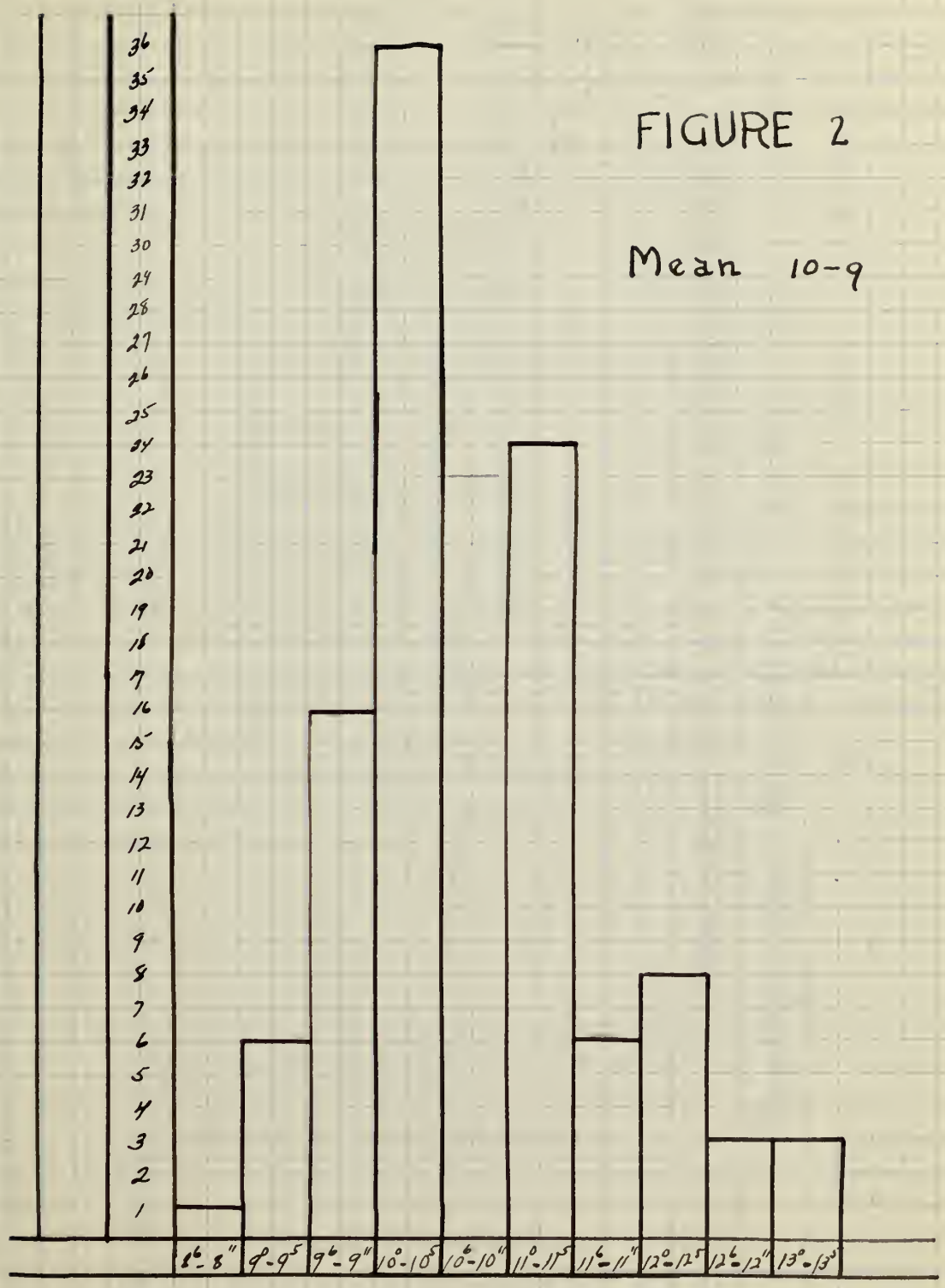
The tests were rotated with 7 of the children to find if possible what degree of learning took place in the giving of the four tests -- that is that had they learned and how and they improved on the fourth test after having taken the other three.

[27] Keller, V.H., An Experimental Study of Certain Techniques for Testing Word Meanings, University of Iowa, Studies in Education, 1934.

FIGURE 1



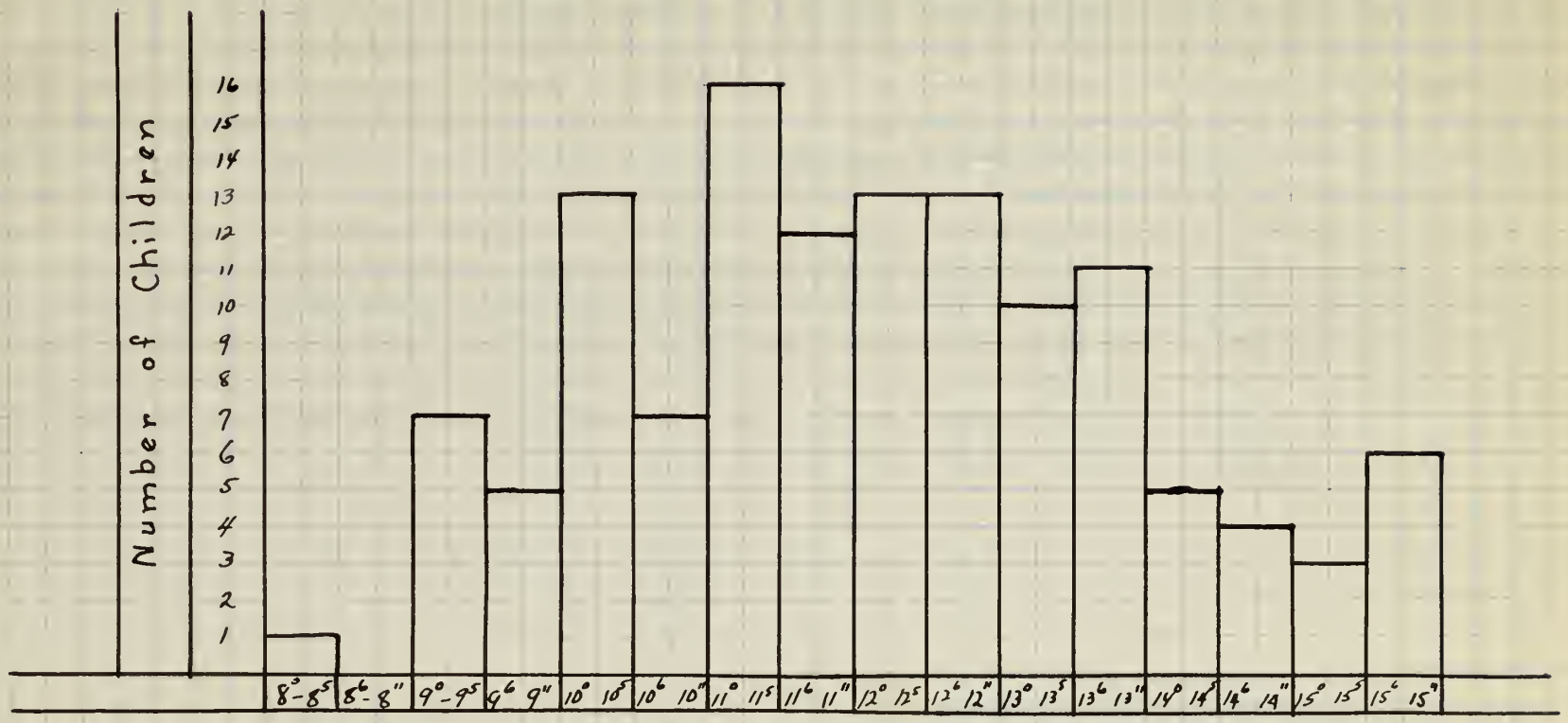
Mental Age Distribution
For the Group of 126 Children
in the
Fifth and Sixth Grades



Chronological Age Distribution
For the Group of 126 Children
in the
Fifth and Sixth Grades

FIGURE 3

Mean 11-11



Reading Age Distribution For the Group of 126 Children in the Fifth and Sixth Grades

[illegible] were given to the [illegible] children, [illegible] [illegible] found at the time of the [illegible] test [illegible], so as the test that the reading and mental scores were [illegible] for each, [illegible] [illegible] in the [illegible] and [illegible] groups. Sixty-eight of the cases in [illegible] of [illegible] [illegible] [illegible].

The children [illegible] part in the Physical [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] of the Tomlinson Study, [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible].

The [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible].

The reading age, mental age, and [illegible] [illegible] scores for [illegible] [illegible] were obtained from the files of the [illegible] [illegible]. The scores are based on the [illegible] Terman and Educational Test of Intelligence. Figures [illegible], [illegible] and [illegible] show the distribution of reading, mental and [illegible] [illegible] for the [illegible].

In chronological age the [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] years [illegible]. In mental age the [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] years [illegible]. In reading age the [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

CHAPTER III

ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

The data were analyzed to find

1. What words were recognized by the children as words that they did not know?

2. How well they were able to discover the meanings of those unknown words from the context of the story?

3. What sex differences there were in the ability to recognize unknown words?

4. What relation existed between these abilities and the levels of reading achievement?

5. Did the children make any gains in four practices?

Figure 2 shows that the range of chronological age of the entire group of 128 children was very narrow - 8 years 11 months to 12 years 8 months - a spread of three years six months.

The range of mental age (Figure I) based on scores from the Kuhlman-Anderson Test of Intelligence was from 5 years 4 months to 14 years 6 months - a spread of 8 years 10 months.

The reading scores as based on the Gates Silent Reading Tests had the greatest range - from 3 years 3 months to 13 years 11 months; a spread of 7 years 8 months. (See Figure 3).

The children were divided into five groups on the basis of their reading ages. Each group contained 25 cases with the exception of the last group (E) which had in it 26 cases.

Group A was made up of those having a reading age of 13-6 and above. Grade placement would be in the eighth grade or above in reading. Group B was made up of those whose reading ages ran from 12-7 to 13-5, or equal in grade placement to the seventh grade. Group C had reading ages from 11-1 to 12-6 or the sixth grade reading level. Group D had reading ages from 10-7 to 11-6, reading on the fifth grade level. Group E reading ages were 10-4 and below.

Group A having the highest reading ability made also the highest scores on all the tests. The average number of words discovered by this group was 10.73 ± .[illegible]. This is 14% of the stimulus words. On the first matching exercise the average was 50.35 ± .28 or 69% of the stimulus words. However, since they failed to get the meanings of 23.18 words, this is only 46% of the words that they said they knew. When they read for the meanings from the context they made an average score of 63.33 ± .27 words. This left 10.[illegible] words still unknown, but showed a gain of 11.33 words or 52.2% of the meanings that they were able to get from the context. The Tables on page 27 show facts.

In the B group whose reading ages were 12-7 to 13-5, the average number of unknown words discovered was 14 ± .33. On the first matching exercise they made an average of 44.5 ± .11, which leaves 18.4 words still unknown. Table II shows that they were able to discover 43% of the words that they did not know. When they read the stories to get the meanings of the unknown words they averaged 44.3 ± .35. There were still 13.2 words that were unknown. This was a gain of 10.2 words or 35.2% of the meanings that they were able to get from the reading. (See Table III).

TABLE II SHOWING ABILITY TO RECOGNIZE

UNKNOWN WORDS

Group	A-Gr.3	B-Gr.4	C-Gr.5	D-Gr.6	E-Gr.4
Unknown Words Discovered	10.70	14.00	14.00	17.00	14.70
Unknown Words	22.10	28.40	34.00	44.00	40.00
% of Unknown Words Discovered	48.00	49.30	40.00	40.70	39.50

Average Words Discovered	14.29
Average Words Unknown	33.30
% of Unknown Words Discovered	39.8%

TABLE III SHOWING THE ABILITY
TO USE CONTEXT TO DISCOVER
WORD MEANINGS

Group	A-Gr.3	B-Gr.7	C-Gr.6	D.Gr.5	E.Gr.4
Unknown Words Test I	32.16	26.40	34.00	44.20	50.25
Words Still Unknown When Content was Used	10.30	19.30	29.20	39.00	44.70
Words Gained	11.[illegible]	10.20	5.00	5.[illegible]	5.40
% of Word Meanings Discovered in Content	32.50	38.[illegible]	16.[illegible]	14.00	10.[illegible]

Average Words Unknown - Test I	36.00
Average Words Still Unknown When Content Was Used	28.10
Words Gained (Average)	7.91
Average % of Meanings Discovered in Content	21.[illegible]

Group C is the one having a reading grade of six and a reading age range of 11 years 6 months to 12 years 6 months. They recorded an average of 14.4 words ±.27 as the ones that they did not know. This is 18.7% of the stimulus words. On test I they averaged 20.2 ±.34, but there were 34.2, or 40.2%, of the words for which they had failed to gain the meanings. On the second test the average score for this group was 45. ±.31. There remained 25.2 words that were unknown although they did make a gain of 5.8 words or 18% by re-reading the stories to get the meanings from the context.

Group D was made up of those children with reading ages of from 10 years 8 months to 11 years 8 months. This corresponds to the fifth grade reading age. The average number of words discovered by this group was 18 ±.24, or 24% of the stimulus words. On the first test they had an average of 22.8 words ± .3 or 40% of the words they recognized as not being known. On the second test where they read for the meanings, they made an average of 23 words ± .15. However, after re-reading to find meanings, they still did not get the meanings of 33 words. They had gained 6.8 words which is a 14% gain.

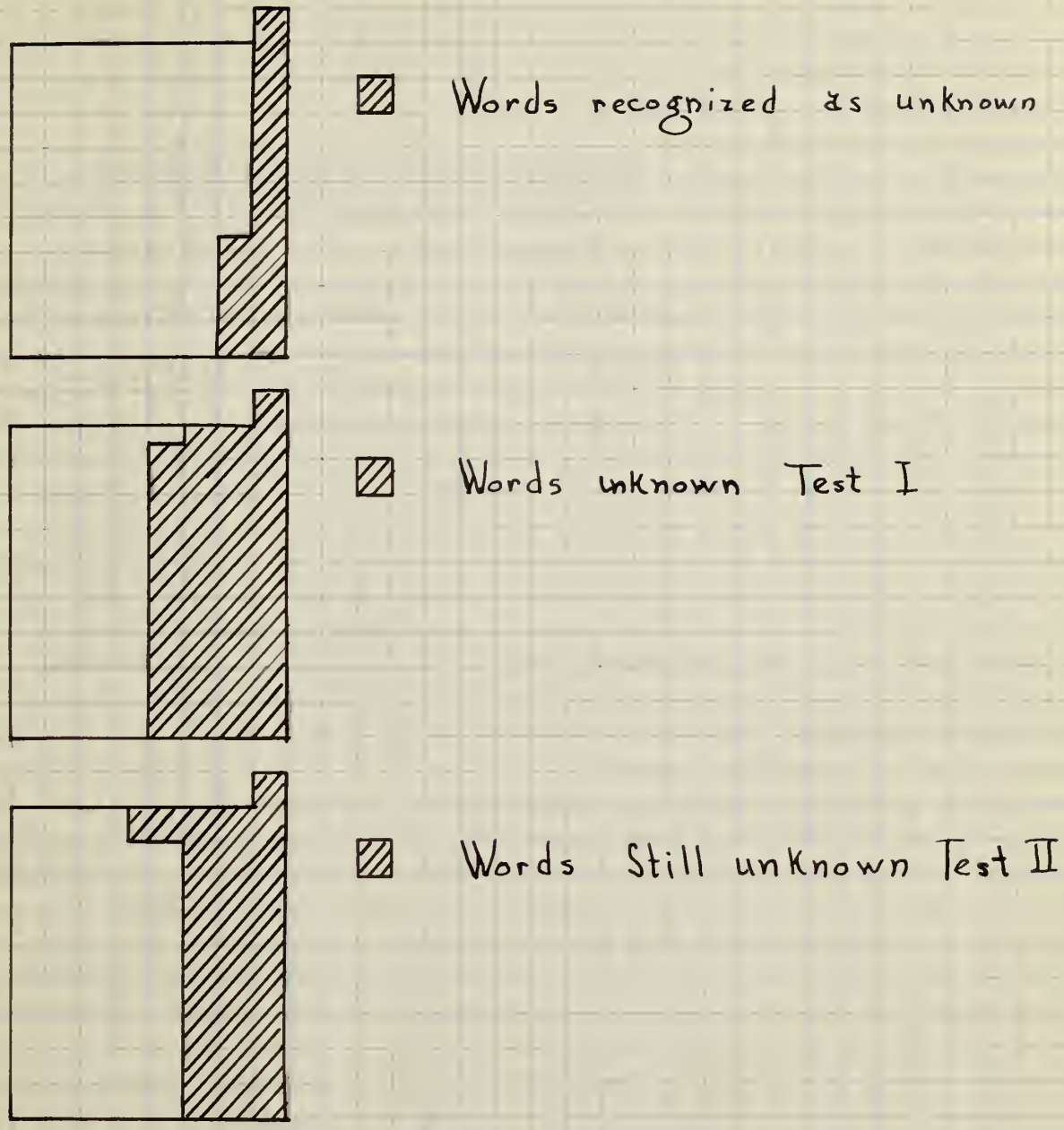
Those having a reading age of 10 years 4 months and lower made up group E. The average number of words said by this group to have been unknown to them was 14.7 ± .13 which is 20% of the stimulus words. The average score on the first test was 22.77 ± .30. This is 33.5% of the words they thought they knew. In reading to get the meanings from the story they made a score of 23.25 ± .30, a gain of 0.48 words, but there were still 44.75 that were unknown. They gained only 10.% in reading for the meanings of the words. Tables II and III show the comparisons for their reading groups.

The average reading age for the whole group of 160 children was 11.9 which corresponds to sixth grade in reading ability. The average of the words recorded as not being known was 18.27±.12. This is 19% of the words on the stimulus words list. In doing the first test the average score was 36.31±.15. This left 36.69 words still unknown. Only 33.11% of the unknown words were discovered. The average on the second test where they read to find the meanings of the words not known was 42.37±.20. This leaves 24.13 words on the list for which they were unable to find the meanings. However, they did get 17.4% on 7.06 words when they read for the meanings from the context.

Table IV shows these differences.

Comparing (Table 5) the work done by the boys (83) with that done by the girls (53), the greatest difference is in the test where they were directed to read for meanings from the context. On recording words that they did not know, the boys averaged 11.49±.12. This is 17% of the stimulus words. The average for the girls on words unknown was 13.26±.35, or 19.9% of the stimulus words. When they were tested for unknown words the boys averaged 36.43±.24 and the girls averaged 36.7±.11; both scoring a little less than 50% of the words on the list of stimulus words. For the boys this left 30.81 words would be unknown and for the girls 36.30 words. The boys discovered 31.47% of the unknown words while the girls discovered 45.9% of the words that they did not know. On the second test where they read for the word meanings from the context, the boys averaged 47.9±.25: the girls averaged 41.27±.18. This left 30.90 words for the boys and 31.33 words for the girls that remained unknown. The boys gained meanings for 16.51 words or 35.7% while the girls gained 14.34 words or 32.29% of the words be-

FIGURE 4



Large Figures represent 73 Stimulus Words

A Comparison of Three Abilities Measured in a Group of 126 Children in Fifth and Sixth Grades

TABLE IV

TABLE SHOWING THE VARIOUS ABILITIES
FOR THE GROUP OF 126 CHILDREN

Unknown Words Discovered	13.37
Unknown Words Test I	36.39
% Of Unknown Words Discovered	38.11
Words Still Unknown After Context Has Used	29.33
Words Gained	7.06
% Of Meanings Discovered From Context	19.40

TABLE V SHOWING SEX DIFFERENCES

	Boys	Girls
Unknown Words Discovered	11.49	13.80
Unknown Words Test I	56.51	56.30
% of Unknown Words Discovered	31.45	49.90
Words Still Unknown When Context Was Used	30.40	31.55
Words Guessed	16.51	14.41
% of Meanings Discovered From Context	37.07	35.52

TABLE VI

TABLE SHOWING THE EFFECT OF FOUR PRACTICES ON THE VARIOUS ABILITIES

Test Given	First	Fourth	Gain
Unknown Words Discovered	18.39	16.75	-1.64
Unknown Words Test I	55.50	56.81	.31
% of Unknown Words Discovered	47.37	42.24	-5.13
Words Still Unknown When Context Was Used	31.22	30.44	- .83
Words Guessed	7.53	9.17	+1.68
% of Meanings Discovered From Context	13.64	21.16	+7.51

using the context to get meanings. Table V gives these differences.

The effect of practice on four types of these abilities is most negligible. The results as shown in Table II reveal that there is only one positive difference among the abilities studied. That is in the matter of words unknown as tested by the first matching exercise.

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study was;

1 To find whether children recognize words they do not know.

2 To find whether children can gain meanings from context.

3 To find what sex differences there are in the ability to find unknown words and to find the meanings in context.

4 To find the relation of these abilities to the different levels of reading achievement.

5 To find what amount of growth takes place in the giving of four practice tests.

Tests were constructed to measure these abilities. The application of these tests to 126 children in the fifth and sixth grades resulted in the following analysis being made:

1 Children were generally unable to recognize words they did not know. Of the words missed on the word-difficulty test, only 41% were discovered in the preliminary reading.

2 There was a slight improvement in the ability to discover unknown words in groups of high reading ability. The grade 4 group discovered 20% of the unknown words, while the grade 1 group discovered 40%.

3 Ability to use context definitions to derive word meanings is not well developed. The meanings of 25% of the unknown words were discovered in the context.

4 The ability to use context to derive meanings improved markedly with reading ability. Grade eight group discovered 62% of the meanings, while grade four group discovered only 20% of the meanings.

b. Sex differences in these abilities were very slight. The girls were superior to the boys in ability to discover unknown words.

c. The amount of improvement in four practice tests was negligible for each of the skills tested.

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APPENDIX

Name_____Grade_____Date_____ 1938

THE CHINCHILLA

More than 2 decades, or about 20 years ago, a man named Chapman was working in the copper mines in Chile, South America. The mines were in the Andes Mountains where in places the altitude is between 11,000 and 18,000 feet. There were places near where he worked where the walls were almost vertical, being nearly straight up and down.

Mr. Chapman was interested in the study of zoology, and studied the habits of all animal life around him. He became interested in a little animal called the Chinchilla. For many years this little animal had been hunted and trapped for his valuable pelt. Where once they had been plentiful and could be found in great numbers very easily, they were now in danger of becoming extinct. Once the Indians brought in many skins, but they killed so many of them that they became hard to find. Now only a very small number remains in the wild state.

Chapman thought that if he could get some of them alive and bring them to the United States, he could save them. He succeeded in getting together a dozen, and after much negotiating and bargaining with the Chilean government, he persuaded them to allow him to bring them out of the country. It took him a year to get them from the high altitudes, where they lived to the sea coast. This was not because the trip was long, hazardous, nor even very dangerous, but he had to get them used to the

lower altitude and warmer climate gradually else they would not live. He finally reached California, where, after trying out different kinds of pens and cages, he succeeded in getting one that seems well suited to them.

He now has between 900 and 1200 animals. They are valued at $1,600 each. None of his Chinchilla's have been killed for their pelts. He sells them to other people who are interested in raising chinchillas.

There are only about 25 coats in the world made from the chinchilla skins. These are owned by members of royalty and people of great wealth. They are valued at $80,000 each.

The Chinchilla is a small animal which in some ways resembles both a rabbit and a squirrel. Its face, body, and ears look like a rabbit&s, while it has a tail like that of a squirrel. It is an animal of nocturnal habits, doing its hunting by night and sleeping during the day. The young chinchillas are very strong. They scamper about quite lively a few hours after they are born. The father helps the mother to care for the babies. They belong to the rodent family, or that group that have long sharp teeth that are used for gnawing as a beaver gnaws a tree. Mr. Chapman feeds them corn, alfalfa, oats, vegetables, raisins, orange juice, and occasionally, when it is necessary, cod liver oil.

A fur buyer said that you can tell a real Chinchilla pelt in this way; you put your hand on it and press it flat against the fur. If the print of your hand remains it is probably real Chinchilla. He said too that the fur is very soft and silky. It is silvery grey in color. Not many people can afford anything so luxurious, costly, and hard to get as a real Chinchilla coat.

Number I

Elivia.

Name_____Grade_____Date_____ 1938

_____vertical

_____chinchilla

_____decade

_____zoology

_____plentiful

_____pelt

_____altitude

_____extinct

1. A period of 10 years.

2. An abundance or full supply.

3. The skin of a beast.

4. No longer living nor active.
Having no living members.

5. To turn upside down or inside out.

6. The study of animals.

7. Rising. Straight upward, from a level surface.

8. A plant of the lily family.

9. The height of an object above a given level, especially above sea level.

10. A squirrel-like animal, whose home is in South America.

11. The manner or bearing of a person which shows his feeling.

_____hazardous

_____rodent

_____persuade

_____resembles

_____negotiating

_____luxurious

_____gradually

_____nocturnal

1. To win over by reasoning or appeal.
To win to full belief.

2. One of the many animals that have long sharp front teeth used for gnawing.

3. To treat for by bargain conferences.
To treat or bargain with others.

4. Risky, dangerous or perilous.

5. Queerness or strangeness.

6. Be of the same or like nature - to be similar to.

7. Done or happening at night; active at night; by night.

8. In a state of calm or rest.

9. Elegant; very comfortable. Something that adds, but not necessary to ones pleasure or comfort.

10. Very slowly or slightly; by degrees or steps.

Number II

Elivia.

Name_____ Grade_____ Date_____ 1938

_____vertical

_____chinchilla

_____decade

_____zoology

_____plentiful

_____pelt

_____altitude

_____extinct

1. A period of 10 years.

2. An abundance or full supply.

3. The skin of a beast.

4. No longer living nor active.
Having no living members.

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To win to full belief.

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6. Be of the same or like nature - to be similar to.

7. Done or happening at night; active at night; by night.

8. In a state of calm or rest.

9. Elegant; very comfortable. Something that adds, but not necessary to ones pleasure or comfort.

10. Very slowly or slightly; by degrees or steps.

ONE MAN'S HOBBY

Name_____Grade_____Date_____ Elivian 1938

Have you ever read about some of the things that the horticulturists have done with plants? A horticulturist is one who works with plants, trying to make better and better ones grow.

Near Santa Barbara, California, is a garden owned and cared for by a clergyman, or priest. Raising flowers is not his profession, or regular work. However, he has become distinguished and made himself famous by his interesting hobby. Many people have hobbies, but few of them follow them with such diligence as this man. He has worked carefully for years. He grows roses, and his garden is a profusion of beautiful flowers. They grow there in great numbers and it seems that nearly everywhere you turn, you see more roses. He has made many experiments with them, trying many things. He now has roses of varied colors and sizes. In fact there is almost any kind of rose that grows to be found in this garden.

By selection, that is by choosing from among the tallest roses each time, he has succeeded in growing a rose tree that is thirteen feet high. Anyone who has visited his garden may have seen his black rose. This is a novel flower, so new and unusual that few people have ever seen one. Around the edge of each petal there is a rim of red. He has produced this rose by always selecting seeds from the very darkest red roses that he has grown. By perseverance, by keeping at his job, and trying again and again, he hopes that after a time even this red rim will disappear and he will have a really black rose. He has imported a diminuitive rose from Japan.

Name_____ Date_____ 1938

Its blossom is about as big as the eraser on the end of your pencil. Working with this midget, a tiny dwarf of a flower, it is his ambition, aim, and desire to produce a rose that will be even smaller. Another rose has been crossed with an apple. The resulting fruit tastes something like an apple and something like a rose. One rose has an exquisite perfume, such a delightful odor, that you can smell it from quite a distance. People often loiter about outside this garden, lingering there just for the sweet perfumes that come from it. He grows one rose that is a brilliant yellow; much brighter than the yellow roses to be found in the usual garden. He has also an orange colored one made possible by crossing his bright yellow flower with a red one. By further crossing he made a brown rose.

Seeing some of the things that he has made grow, one might think them artificial, and indeed they do not seem real when judged by the colors and sizes of some of them. However, you can be sure that they are genuine and that they are real living flowers.

NUMBER I

Name_____ Grade_____ Date_____ Elivian 1938

_____adrift	1.	General movement of anything.
_____awash	2.	Abandoned or deserted.
_____collide	3.	Drifting about without being anchored.
_____combustible	4.	Any of fresh or salt water fish.
_____current	5.	Level with or just above the surface of the water.
_____davits	6.	To think up or to plan.
_____derelict	7.	To crash or come together with a great force.
_____elusive	8.	Apt to catch fire; easily burned.
_____occupant	9.	Skillful in escaping; slips away to keep from being captured.
	10.	A pair of posts or arms used on ships for raising or lowering small boats.
	11.	One who uses a place for living quarters; a tenant or renter.

_____estimate	1.	Having to do with ships or the sea.
_____hulk	2.	To trouble with being present in great numbers.
_____infest	3.	Filled with water so as to be heavy or log-like.
_____invisible	4.	Places.
_____localities	5.	Not behaving.
_____nautical	6.	White wax.
_____paraffin	7.	The remains of worn out or wrecked ships.
_____salvaged	8.	Not able to be seen.
_____water-logged	9.	To have watchful care over.
	10.	The act of saving a ship.
	11.	To give or form an idea of the value, size, or cost of anything.

NUMBER II

Elivian

Name_____ Grade_____ Date_____ 1938

_____adrift	1.	General movement of anything.
_____awash	2.	Abandoned or deserted.
_____collide	3.	Drifting about without being anchored.
_____combustible	4.	Any of fresh or salt water fish.
_____current	5.	Level with or just above the surface of the water.
_____davits	6.	To think up or to plan.
_____derelict	7.	To crash or come together with a great force.
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_____occupant	9.	Skillful in escaping; slips away to keep from being captured.
	10.	A pair of posts or arms used on ships for raising or lowering small boats.
	11.	One who uses a place for living quarters; a tenant or renter.

_____estimate	1.	Having to do with ships or the sea.
_____hulk	2.	To trouble with being present in great numbers.
_____infest	3.	Filled with water so as to be heavy or log-like.
_____invisible	4.	Places.
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_____salvaged	8.	Not able to be seen.
_____water-logged	9.	To have watchful care over.
	10.	The act of saving a ship.
	11.	To give or form an idea of the value, size, or cost of anything.

DERELICT SHIPS

Name_____ Grade_____ Date_____ Elivian 1938

In many nautical stories, or stories written about ships, you read that the crew of a sinking ship leaves her before it is certain that the danger which threatens is really serious. After the storm is over, these stories say that these vessels drift along with the ocean currents for as many as four or five months without a single person aboard. One has been known to have been adrift for four years. These derelict ships are even more dangerous than the great numbers of icebergs that infest the northern and southern seas. They have been found floating in all parts of the ocean. Most derelicts are found in the Atlantic Ocean although some are found in other waters. Many of them are loaded with lumber and have become so water-logged, or water-soaked, that they are really a-wash. When one of these ships with her decks about level with the water, is drifting in the path of ships sailing across the ocean, they present a very great danger. They are extremely elusive, drifting along as they do, and give the searchers quite a chase. Ship Masters always report it when one of them is seen and it is one of the duties of the United States Coast Guard to send men out to destroy these vessels. One was seen by passing ships and reported from many different localities, or places. They searched and searched and were finally able to destroy it.

Derelicts are destroyed in many different ways. One way is to load them with paraffin and then set fire to them. This is not always successful as the ship will burn down to the water line and the hulk will continue to float.

Elivian

Name_____Date_____ 1938

When this happens, what is left offers greater danger than before. Even with the most careful watching they cannot be seen as the hulks are invisable and many ships have been known to collide with them. Another way to destory these ships is to fire on them with torpedoes or bombs. Sometimes this is not successful and the derelict goes floating on its way. Some are salvaged and brought into port by crews from passing ships. These men are paid large rewards when they bring in a derelict ship. One such vessel was found having a combustible cargo aboard. When it was boarded by the salvage crew, they found the life-boats with the exception of one, still hanging on the davits, those crane-like arms that hold the life-boats in place. The crew had left when the ~~first~~ explosion from gas in the hold was heard. They thought the cargo with which the ship was loaded would catch fire. All crowded into one life-boat, leaving half-finished breakfasts on the tables, and a loaded ship without a single occupant aboard.

It is estimated that there are about 3000 derelicts afloat in the ocean at all times, but it should be remembered that this is just a guess.

Number I

Elivian 1938

Name_____ Grade_____ Date_____

_____profession	1. Keeping at something in spite of difficulties.
_____varied	2. New or unusual.
_____clergyman	3. An occupation or work that requires special training.
_____artificial	4. Not natural; made to look like something natural.
_____perseverance	5. Careful and continued effort at doing something.
_____experiment	6. Aim or object toward which one works.
_____ambition	7. Being of different kinds or sorts; not all alike.
_____novel	8. A very small person or dwarf; anything dwarf-like.
_____midget	9. A trial, test, or proof to find out about something that is unknown.
_____diligence	10. A member of the clergy; a minister or priest.
	11. To collect together in a crowd or a mass.
	12. To come down or go down from a higher place to a lower one.

_____brilliant	1. Without special study or preparation.
_____diminuitive	2. Very beautiful or delightful.
_____genuine	3. One of the leaves of a flower or blossom of a plant.
_____horticulturist	4. A plentiful supply; more than enough; abundant.
_____profusion	5. Actually what it seems to be; real.
_____petal	6. Very bright.
_____selection	7. One who grows, studies, and explains facts about growing fruits, vegetables, and flowers.
_____distinguished	8. Famous or notable.
_____exquisite	9. Very small; tiny.
_____loiter	10. The act of choosing.
	11. To lag behind; be slow in moving; to linger.
	12. To raise or assist the growing of crops by labor and care.

Number II

Elivian 1938

Name_____Grade_____Date_____

_____profession	1. Keeping at something in spite of difficulties.
_____varied	2. New or unusual.
_____clergyman	3. An occupation or work that requires special training.
_____artificial	4. Not natural; made to look like something natural.
_____perseverance	5. Careful and continued effort at doing something.
_____experiment	6. Aim or object toward which one works.
_____ambition	7. Being of different kinds or sorts; not all alike.
_____novel	8. A very small person or dwarf; anything dwarf-like.
_____midget	9. A trial, test, or proof to find out about something that is unknown.
_____diligence	10. A member of the clergy; a minister or priest.
	11. To collect together in a crowd or a mass.
	12. To come down or go down from a higher place to a lower one.

_____brilliant	1. Without special study or preparation.
_____diminuitive	2. Very beautiful or delightful.
_____genuine	3. One of the leaves of a flower or blossom of a plant.
_____horticulturist	4. A plentiful supply; more than enough; abundant.
_____profusion	5. Actually what it seems to be; real.
_____petal	6. Very bright.
_____selection	7. One who grows, studies, and explains facts about growing fruits, vegetables, and flowers.
_____distinguished	8. Famous or notable.
_____exquisite	9. Very small; tiny.
_____loiter	10. The act of choosing.
	11. To lag behind; be slow in moving; to linger.
	12. To raise or assist the growing of crops by labor and care.

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